



Transportation Fact Sheet

Trails

Access to and within the National Park System has been a defining experience for generations of visitors.

The National Park Service (NPS) coordinates the planning and implementation of transportation systems that improve the visitor experience and care for national parks by:

- Preserving natural and cultural resources.
- Enhancing visitor safety and security.
- Protecting plant and animal species.
- Reducing congestion.
- Decreasing pollution.

NPS is committed to being a leader in pursuing strategies that can help make park units more enjoyable, cleaner, quieter, and more sustainable for present and future generations.

For more information, visit nps.gov/transportation

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service maintains 18,600 miles of trails which provide visitors the opportunity to escape from their automobiles and enjoy remote park landscapes in their natural state.

What is the Trails Program?

NPS assists in trail development by managing components of the National Trails System. This network spans thousands of miles throughout the park system and is comprised of the following trail designations:

- National Scenic Trails – Scenic trails are dedicated primarily to foot travel and other non-motorized uses. Each Scenic Trail is over 100 miles in length and they often cross state lines.
- National Historic Trails – These trails commemorate historic and prehistoric routes, and are of significance to the entire Nation.
- National Recreation Trails – Recreation trails provide numerous outdoor recreation activities in a variety of urban, rural, and remote areas. This network alone features over 1,000 trails in all 50 states.

Additionally, the NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program (RTCA) works with communities, States, and nonprofits -- often linking to national park areas -- to develop new trails and greenways, to conserve rivers, and to preserve open space. Visit www.nps.gov/rtca for more information.

Trails are a cooperative effort

Several outstanding organizations provide volunteers, training, and skills that greatly enhance park trails. Among these are the Student Conservation Association, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and the American Hiking Society's Volunteer vacations. Volunteers often supplement staff efforts by clearing brush, inspecting for weather and erosion damage, repairing signs, and rebuilding flooded or burned areas.

Promoting healthy lifestyles and creating a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environment

Trails provide hiking, biking, and walking opportunities that are good for both human health and the health of the parks. All park trails are open to pedestrians, while six percent are paved and used by bicyclists. For every one million visitors who replace driving with a 10-mile bicycle trip, the savings amount to 500,000 gallons of gas and the resulting 164 tons of carbon monoxide, 21.5 tons of nitrous oxides, and 19.5 tons of hydrocarbons not emitted into the atmosphere.



Trails

Assateague Island National Seashore in Maryland and Virginia

Hiking and biking trails are great ways to explore this 37 mile-long barrier island, leading visitors from forest to marsh and along shallows and dunes. At both the Maryland and Virginia entry points, cyclists and pedestrians have many options to bypass beach traffic via specially-designated parking areas, a bicycle-pedestrian bridge near the Visitor's Center, and a paved path on the Virginia side leading visitors on foot and on bicycles from the town of Chincoteague to the park. Along the way, there are interpretive hiking loops for visitors to learn about the weather, geology, and wildlife of the island.

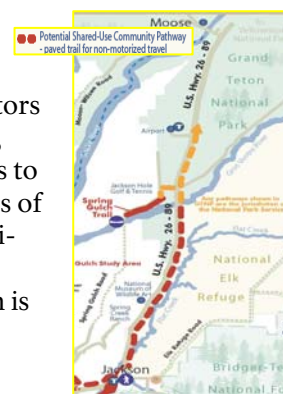


"Trails Forever" Initiative at Golden Gate National Park in California

Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) contains some of the most heavily utilized national park properties and trails in America. Since much of this land was once used for military and other purposes, many trails are poorly located without a notable "destination," and erosion has become a major issue. The Golden Gate National Park Conservancy began the "Trails Forever" initiative in 2003 and has worked with co-sponsors NPS and Presidio Trust to help rehabilitate 60 miles of trails in order to build a world class trail system and protect park resources north and south of the Golden Gate. Since much of GGNRA abuts densely populated areas, a signature element of Trails Forever is to restore connections to these gateway communities and increase awareness of NPS's presence in the Bay Area.

Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming

The town of Jackson, Wyoming is a bustling tourism destination attracting 2.5 million visitors each year. Though separated from Grand Teton National Park (GTNP) by just four miles, currently there is no public transportation or trail connecting the town to the park. Efforts to complete this critical link are ongoing, led by NPS and the non-profit organization Friends of Pathways. The recently adopted GTNP Transportation Plan authorizes 41.3 miles of multi-use pathway construction extending to the southern edge of the park closest to Jackson. Included as a focal point in the Town of Jackson and Teton County Pathways Master Plan is a shared-use community pathway for non-motorized travel that will ultimately connect GTNP to the emerging pathways in the town of Jackson.



Appalachian National Scenic Trail, stretching from Maine to Georgia

Dubbed "The People's Path," and "America's First National Scenic Trail," this 2,175-mile long footpath traverses the wild, scenic, pastoral, and culturally significant lands of the Appalachian Mountains. It is estimated that 3 to 4 million visitors hike a portion of the Appalachian Trail each year, with several hundred of them completing the entire trail and gaining the moniker "2,000-milers." NPS contributes nearly \$2 million annually to the continued maintenance and improvement of the 165,000-acre permanent right-of-way.